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the  
**MIDDLE FORK** of the  
**SALMON**  
a wild and scenic river



**map and guide**  
not for resale

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## MIDDLE FORK OF THE SALMON

The Middle Fork of the Salmon River originates 20 miles northwest of Stanley, Idaho, with the merging of Bear Valley and Marsh Creeks. It traverses portions of the Challis, Payette, and Salmon National Forests as it flows 106 miles northeast through one of the deepest gorges in North America before joining the Main Salmon River. The Middle Fork was one of the original eight rivers in the nation designated as Wild and Scenic on October 2, 1968. In July, 1980, the President of the United States established the "Frank Church—River of No Return Wilderness" which encompasses the Wild and Scenic River in its entirety.

It passes through a landscape of rugged peaks and deep valleys. Near its junction with the Main Salmon River are the Bighorn Crag, one of the most rugged and wild mountain ranges in the nation. Only a few trails, landing strips, private ranches and Forest Service stations are evidence of man's presence. It is this combination of rugged scenic beauty, quiet isolation, and the challenge of wild water that draws people to float the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

A number of Forest Service trails extend out on either side of the river, offering interesting side trips. A map and a compass are recommended for cross-country travel. A map of the surrounding Frank Church—River of No Return Wilderness is available from Forest Service offices listed on the following page.

## FRANK CHURCH—RIVER OF NO RETURN WILDERNESS

The 2.3 million-acre Frank Church—River of No Return Wilderness—through which the river runs—includes parts of the Bitterroot, Boise, Challis, Nezperce, Payette and Salmon National Forests. Like other Wilderness areas throughout the National Forest System, the Frank Church—River of No Return Wilderness has been set aside to preserve and perpetuate natural conditions. To maintain this atmosphere, motorized equipment or transportation is not allowed, except by airplane or helicopter to established landing strips.



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## PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Due to the increasing popularity of white water floating, and to protect the wild and scenic qualities, it is necessary to limit use on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. This is accomplished by requiring permits for each party floating the river. During the heavy use floating season (June 1-Sept 3) advance reservations are needed for permits. Between September 3 and May 31, permits may be obtained on a first come, first serve basis. Permits are required on a year around basis. Application blanks and other information can be obtained from the Middle Fork District Ranger (see address below).

## INFORMATION SOURCES

Further information regarding obtaining a trip permit, party size, sanitation requirements, and other conditions of use may be obtained by contacting the Middle Fork District Ranger, Challis National Forest, in Challis, Idaho 83226, phone (208) 879-5204.

For additional information on adjoining Ranger Districts relative to trails, Wilderness access, and Wilderness maps, contact:

\*Middle Fork Ranger District  
Challis, Idaho 83226  
Phone: (208) 879-5204

Challis Ranger District  
Challis, Idaho 83226  
Phone: (208) 879-4321

Payette National Forest  
Forest Service Building  
McCall, Idaho 83638  
Phone: (208) 634-2255

Salmon National Forest  
Forest Service Building  
Salmon, Idaho 83467  
Phone: (208) 756-2215

North Fork Ranger District  
North Fork, Idaho 83466  
Phone: (208) 865-2383

Challis National Forest  
Supervisor's Office  
Challis, Idaho 83226  
Phone: (208) 879-2285

Yankee Fork Ranger District  
Clayton, Idaho 83227  
Phone: (208) 838-2201 or 838-2202

McCall Ranger District  
McCall, Idaho 83638  
Phone: (208) 634-2255

Cobalt Ranger District  
Salmon, Idaho 83467  
Winter Phone: (208) 756-2240  
Summer Phone: 22F11

Sawtooth National Recreation Area  
Stanley Zone Office  
Stanley, Idaho 83278  
Phone: (208) 744-3511


\*River floating permits obtained here.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game, P.O. Box 25, Boise, Idaho 83707, can provide you with hunting and fishing information. Also, check bookstores in Idaho and western Montana for river guide books and other publications that may be helpful to you.

# MIDDLE FORK SALMON RIVER

## LEGEND

### CAMPSITES/CAPACITY

-  more than 20 persons
-  10-20 persons
-  less than 10 persons
-  with toilet facilities
-  without toilet facilities

### RAPIDS

-  CLASS II
-  CLASS III
-  CLASS IV

-  STATE LAND
-  PRIVATE LAND
-  FOREST BOUNDARY
-  PAVED ROAD
-  DIRT OR GRAVEL ROAD
-  TRAIL

— · — WILD AND SCENIC RIVER BOUNDARY

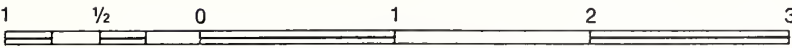
 FRANK CHURCH—RIVER OF NO RETURN  
WILDERNESS BOUNDARY

 MILEAGE (FROM BOUNDARY CREEK)

 FOREST SERVICE GUARD STATION

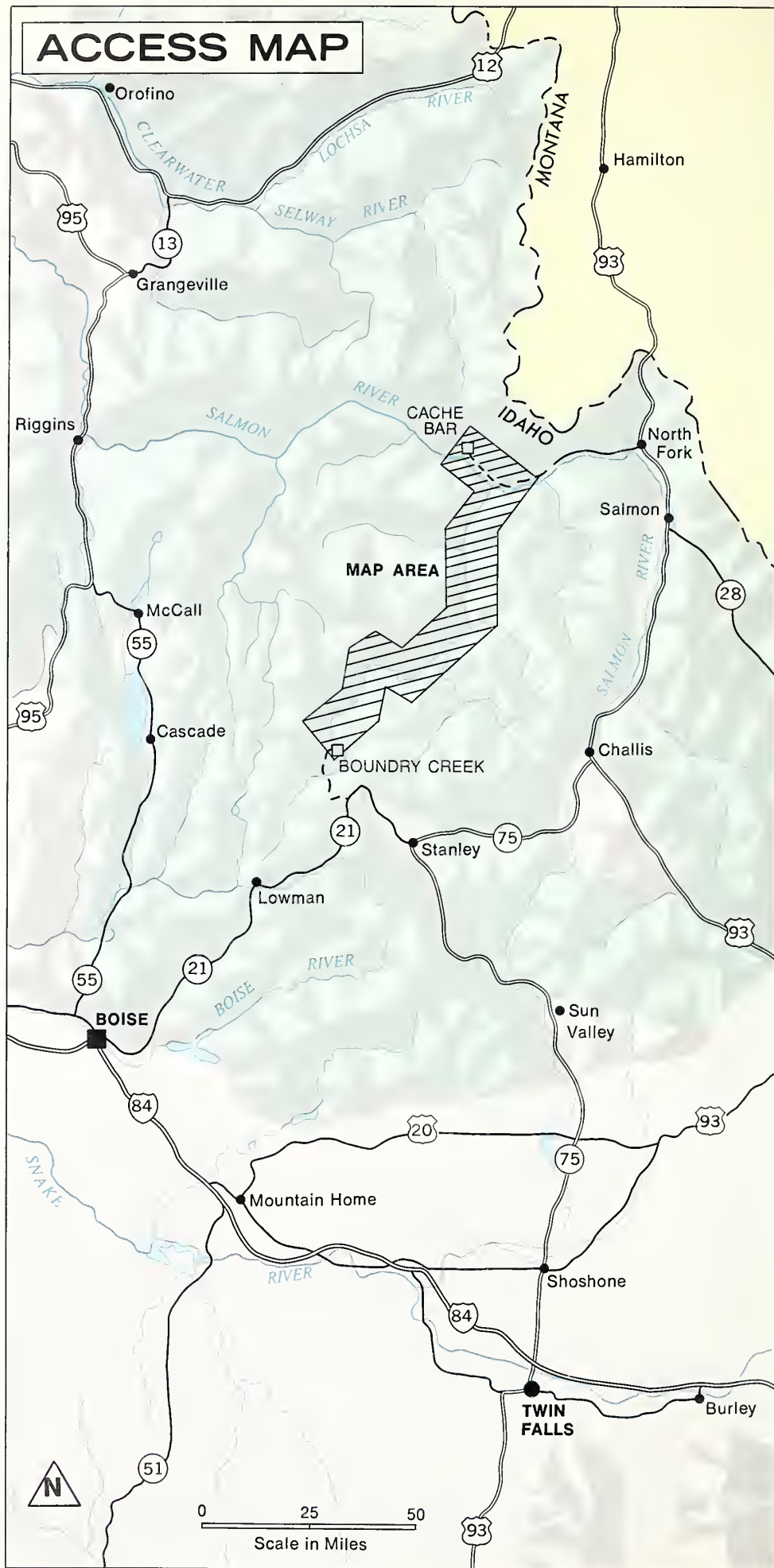
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 FEET

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SCALE IN MILES

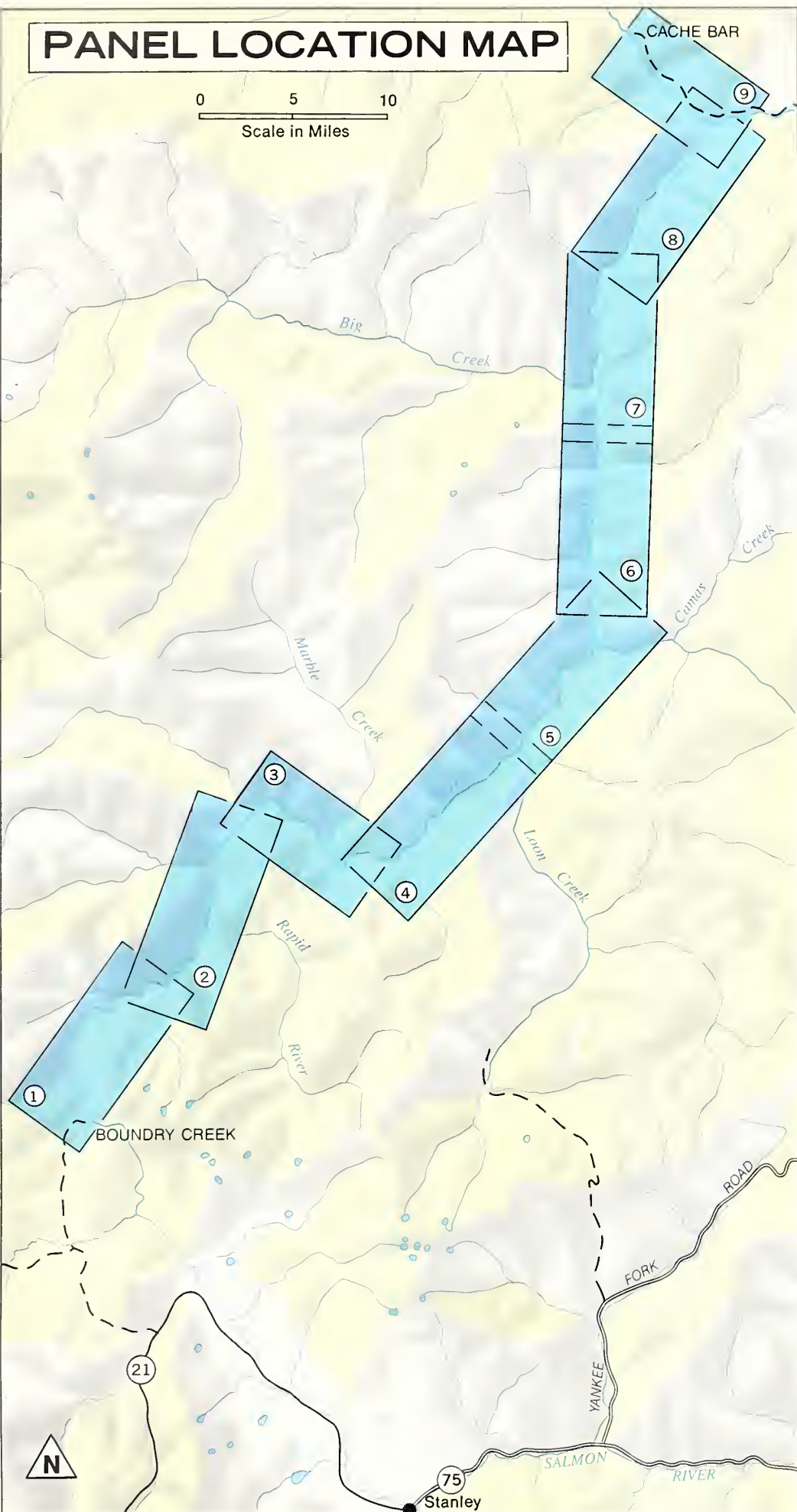
# ACCESS MAP





# PANEL LOCATION MAP

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Scale in Miles



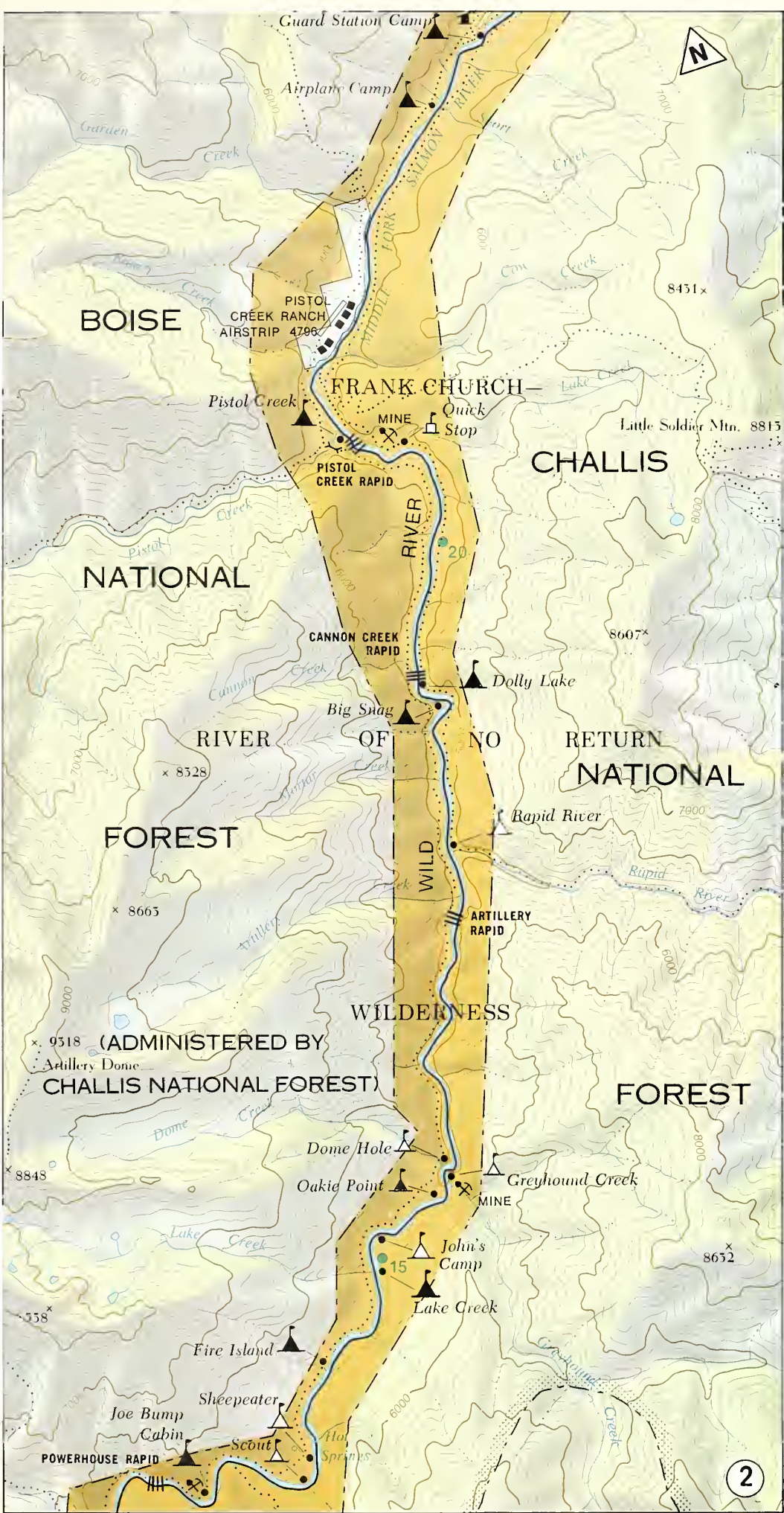
- MILE 0.0**      **BOUNDARY CREEK CAMP AND LAUNCH AREA** - A large campground is located about 60 feet above the river. Permits and camping schedules are issued here by the Forest Service, on the day for which reservations are held.
- MILE 0.1**      **FIRST BEND RAPID (Class II)** - As the river bends right and out of sight of the launch area, it divides in a Class II drop. The center channel is usually best.
- MILE 0.7**      **TEEPEE HOLE CAMP** (left bank) - This is a small, but heavily used site and popular with fishermen who hike down from Dagger Falls.
- MILE 0.8**      **UNNAMED RAPID (Class II+)** - There is a log dam and a small island. Always take the right channel.
- MILE 1.6**      **CABLE HOLE CAMP** (left bank) - Just above the Morgan Ranch airstrip is a small camp located on a rocky bench with some cleared areas.
- MILE 2.0**      **MORGAN RANCH AIRSTRIP** (left bank - private) - The airstrip is set back from the river and generally unseen.
- MILE 2.4**      **GARDELL'S HOLE CAMP** (right bank) - This large camp is on a sand and gravel bar at the top of a large pool. Sulphur Slide Rapid begins below the pool as the river bends left.
- MILE 2.45**      **SULPHUR SLIDE RAPID (Class III to III+)** - This is a steep, fairly long rock garden, with critical maneuvering at the top. At moderate to high water, enter center and work left. At low water it's wise to scout.
- MILE 2.7**      **SPRING CAMP** (left bank) - The swift current makes landing difficult at this small, grassy area.
- MILE 4.8**      **RAMSHORN CAMP** (left bank) - The camp is about a third of a mile above Velvet Falls.
- MILE 5.1**      **VELVET FALLS (Class IV)** - You won't be able to hear the falls coming up (hence the name) because of the Class II water above it. Look for a very large boulder (about 10 feet high, 10 feet wide, and 20 feet long) at the water's edge on the left bank, and a small creek entering the river on the right. The falls are about 20 feet below these two features. You should scout the drop. If not, stay to the left, right next to the boulder. This lane should take you into a narrow chute which will carry you through.
- MILE 5.5**      **BOY SCOUT CAMP** (right bank) - This is a rocky area. Sand accumulation varies from year to year.
- MILE 6.5**      **BIG BEND CAMP** (right bank) - This is a large, spacious campsite on a low bench and sand bar with both timber and open areas.
- MILE 6.9**      **TRAIL FLAT CAMP** (left bank) - This camp is on a large rocky bench that will accommodate a large party. A hot springs at the river's edge is washed out at high water, but is usable at lower water.
- MILE 8.0**      **THE CHUTES (Class III to III+)** - The river bends left. The right (outside edge) of the bend is shallow, with log jams. Stay left, avoiding the rock at the channel entrance. At low flows this rapid becomes tricky, with some big holes.
- MILE 8.1**      **RAPID CAMP** (left bank) - This small camp is across and downstream from Elkhorn Bar Camp.
- MILE 8.2**      **ELKHORN BAR CAMP** (right bank) - Camping is possible both on the higher bank (the main site), or around the bend on the bar of this large site. Look for a large rock in the center of the river just above the camp.
- MILE 9.3**      **SADDLE CAMP** (left bank) - The site is named for the large grassy saddle on the ridge above the timbered flat, where the camp is located.
- MILE 9.5**      **BOOT CAMP** (right bank) - This very small site is located just around the corner from Saddle Camp on a high, timbered bench.
- MILE 11.2**      **POWERHOUSE RAPIDS (Class III to IV)** - You can land just above the rapids on the right side, to scout. The rapids are in three sections. The first enter center, work center. A short pool leads to the second, a drop as the river bends left and impinges on the cliff. This drop is followed by a section leading to the final drop.





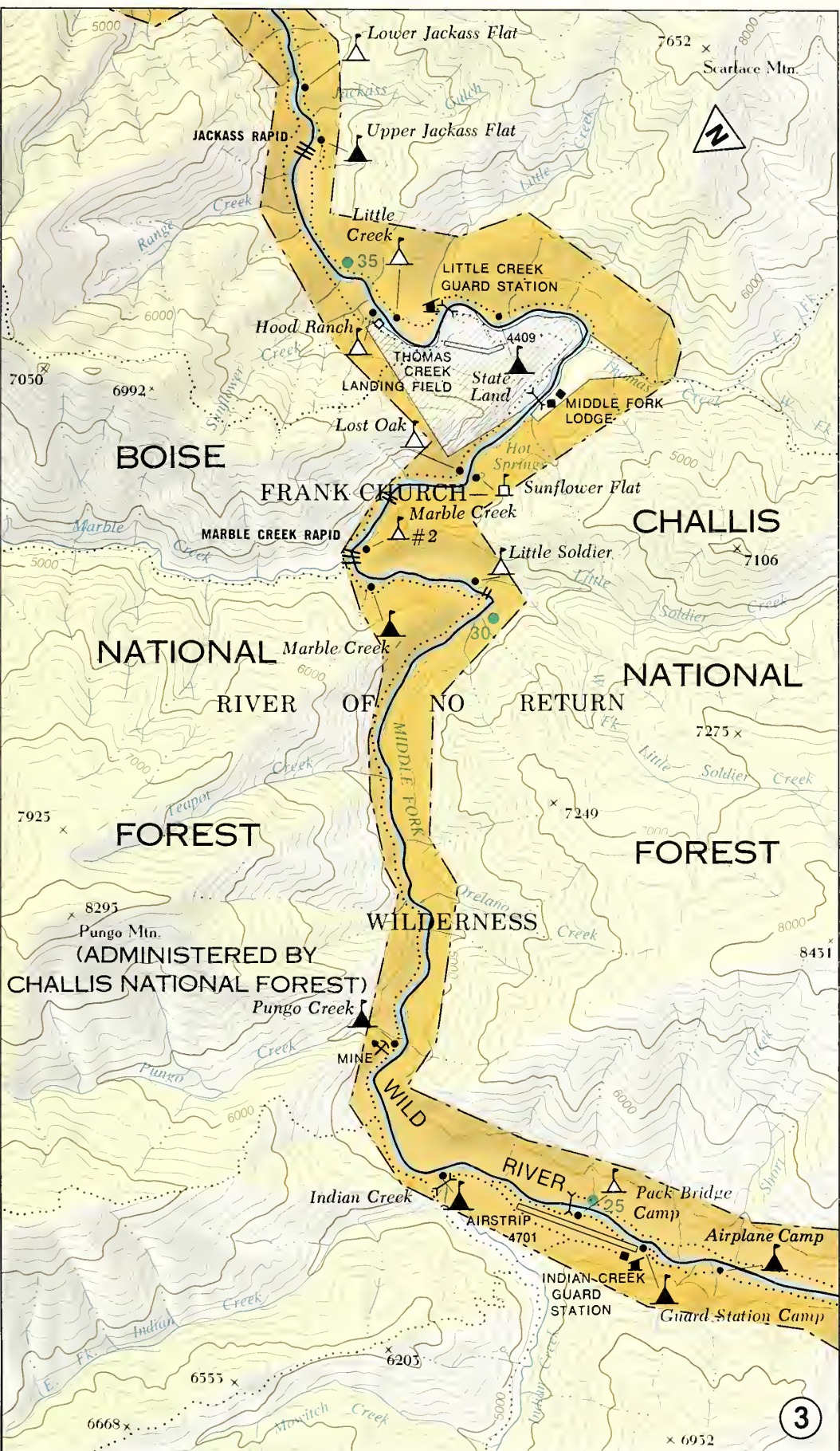
- MILE 11.8**     **JOE BUMP CABIN** (left bank) - The campsite is across the river from the mouth of Soldier Creek, and about 100 yards downstream from the cabin. This is a large timbered bench with clearings sufficient to accommodate a large party.
- MILE 12.7**     **SCOUT CAMP** (left bank) - This camp occupies the upstream end of the bar and bench from the Sheepeater Hot Springs and camp. Scout Camp is located in the timbered section of the bar. There are sandy clearings among the trees.
- MILE 13.0**     **SHEEPEATER HOT SPRINGS** (left bank) - Landing can be a problem at low water because the river is so wide and shallow here. The hot springs are on the high terrace behind the camp.
- MILE 13.8**     **FIRE ISLAND** (left bank) - There is space for a large party on the low timber and grass bench.
- MILE 14.9**     **LAKE CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - The camp is across the river from the mouth of Lake Creek.
- MILE 15.2**     **JOHN'S CAMP** (right bank) - The camp occupies a large bench (scattered timber) where the river bends sharply to the right.
- MILE 15.6**     **OAKIE POINT CAMP** (left bank) - The camp was formerly called Lake Creek Camp. The landing is marked by a large, easily visible stump on the inside of the bend. Look for it well ahead, since the current is swift and landing can be difficult.
- MILE 15.9**     **GREYHOUND CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - This campsite is by a pool. The camp is on the bench about ten feet above the river and back in the trees.
- MILE 15.9**     **DOMES HOLE CAMP** (left bank) - This small camp lies just around the bend and past the pool from Greyhound Creek.
- MILE 17.7**     **ARTILLERY RAPIDS** (Class II+ to III-) - This is a long but relatively easy rapid, with no definite beginning or end. The long series of holes and waves offer excitement for kayakers.
- MILE 17.8**     **ARTILLERY CREEK** (left bank) - A reference point; you are now beyond Artillery Rapids.
- MILE 18.2**     **RAPID RIVER CAMP** (right bank) - The site is just below the mouth of Rapid River, on a high bench with scattered timber. There is room for a large party.
- MILE 19.0**     **BIG SNAG CAMP** (left bank) - The campsite is on a big, calm pool, just before the river swings abruptly to the left.
- MILE 19.1**     **DOLLY LAKE CAMP** (right bank) - This large camp is located just below the Big Snag Camp and pool, on a right hand bend.
- MILE 19.3**     **CANNON CREEK RAPIDS** (Class III-) - This is a short, quick stop. At low water, work left or inside to miss a ledge exposed on the right. At higher flows, this rock shelf forms a fair-sized hole.
- MILE 20.9**     **QUICK STOP** (right bank) - A possible campsite for a small party, where the river bends sharply left above Pistol Creek Rapid. The site is also used for scouting Pistol Creek Rapid.
- MILE 21.4**     **PISTOL CREEK RAPID** (Class III+ to IV-) - This tight S turn is extremely difficult. The river bends right. Approaching the S, one can either stay right, avoiding the gravel bar in mid-channel (low water) and enter the drop directly; or go left, and enter through a big hole (small rafts have been flipped end-over-end in it). At this point, the cliffs pinch in and the river takes an abrupt 90 degree bend to the left. There are rocks on the right. Avoid them by swinging left (to the inside of the bend), then right to miss the cliff face immediately below the drop. The river is extremely narrow here; the flow deflecting off the wall at the end of the S creates strong and unpredictable current.
- MILE 21.4**     **PISTOL CREEK CAMP** (left bank) - The campsite is just below the rapids and upstream of Pistol Creek on a sandbar and low bench.
- MILE 23.9**     **AIRPLANE CAMP** (left bank) - This is a large timbered and open site about one and a half miles below Pistol Creek Ranch.





- MILE 24.7 GUARD STATION CAMP** (left bank) - Camping is possible along the river at a variety of spots from the boat ramp to the bridge. The area by the river at the boat ramp is the primary staging area at low water, with equipment and passengers flown in. Toilet.
- MILE 25.1 INDIAN CREEK PACK BRIDGE** (left bank) - The campsite is just above the pack bridge.
- MILE 26.2 INDIAN CREEK CAMP** (left bank) - This large site is on the upstream side at the mouth of Indian Creek.
- MILE 27.4 PUNGO CREEK CAMP** (left bank) - Landing is easy at this large heavily used camp, located at the mouth of Pungo Creek.
- MILE 30.8 LITTLE SOLDIER CAMP** (right bank) - Landing is on a small beach just below the creek, after an unnamed rapid on a left bend. There is plenty of space among the timber on the higher benches.
- MILE 31.6 MARBLE CREEK CAMP** (left bank) - The campsite is on the very large low bench along a long and quiet pool. Toilet.
- MILE 31.7 MARBLE CREEK RAPIDS** (Class III-) - The river bends sharply right as you enter this drop below the camp. A center course (center, left at the bottom) through the entire rapids should avoid most of the difficult spots.
- MILE 31.7 MARBLE CREEK CAMP #2** (right bank) - The camp occupies a grassy and timbered bench on the inside of the bend just below the rapids, and across from Marble Creek. Landing is easy; the site will accommodate a medium-sized party.
- MILE 32.6 SUNFLOWER FLAT** (right bank) - It is a nice, small campsite with a magnificent hot springs that cascades to the river's edge. Many stop here for this natural shower. Unfortunately, some people use soap (contrary to Forest Service Regulations), and the river bank is often visibly polluted. The site was burned several years ago when a camper let his fire get away. This is a fine spot that deserves better care than it has received from some campers.
- MILE 32.6+ LOST OAK CAMP** (left bank) - Located across the river from Sunflower Flat, Lost Oak is a large camp on a timbered bench or terrace.
- MILE 33.3 MIDDLE FORK LODGE** (right bank - private) - The gaging station, from which the Forest Service and the River Forecast Service in Portland get their data on the Middle Fork, is located here.
- MILE 34.6 STATELAND CAMP** (right bank) - The site is  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile below the big bend to the right following Middle Fork Lodge. It is on a spacious low bench with scattered ponderosa pine.
- MILE 35.8 LITTLE CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - This camp is located on a large bench downstream and around the bend from the Little Creek Guard Station and bridge.
- MILE 35.9 HOOD RANCH** (left bank) - This large campsite is signaled by the old cabin, which can be seen easily from the river. There is a hot springs on the bench bank from the river. A low gravel bar divides the river. To land here, take the left hand (narrow) channel, if there is enough water; if it is too low, go around right and pull in below the bar.
- MILE 37.2 JACKASS RAPIDS** (Class III-) - This is a short but abrupt drop over a ledge or boulder where the river jogs sharp right. The run is hard right.
- MILE 37.3 UPPER JACKASS FLAT CAMP** (right bank) - Access is easy to this large sandbar.
- MILE 37.6 LOWER JACKASS FLAT CAMP** (right bank) - Similar to the upper camp, but with less sand and more timber; this is a low bench rather than a sandbar.





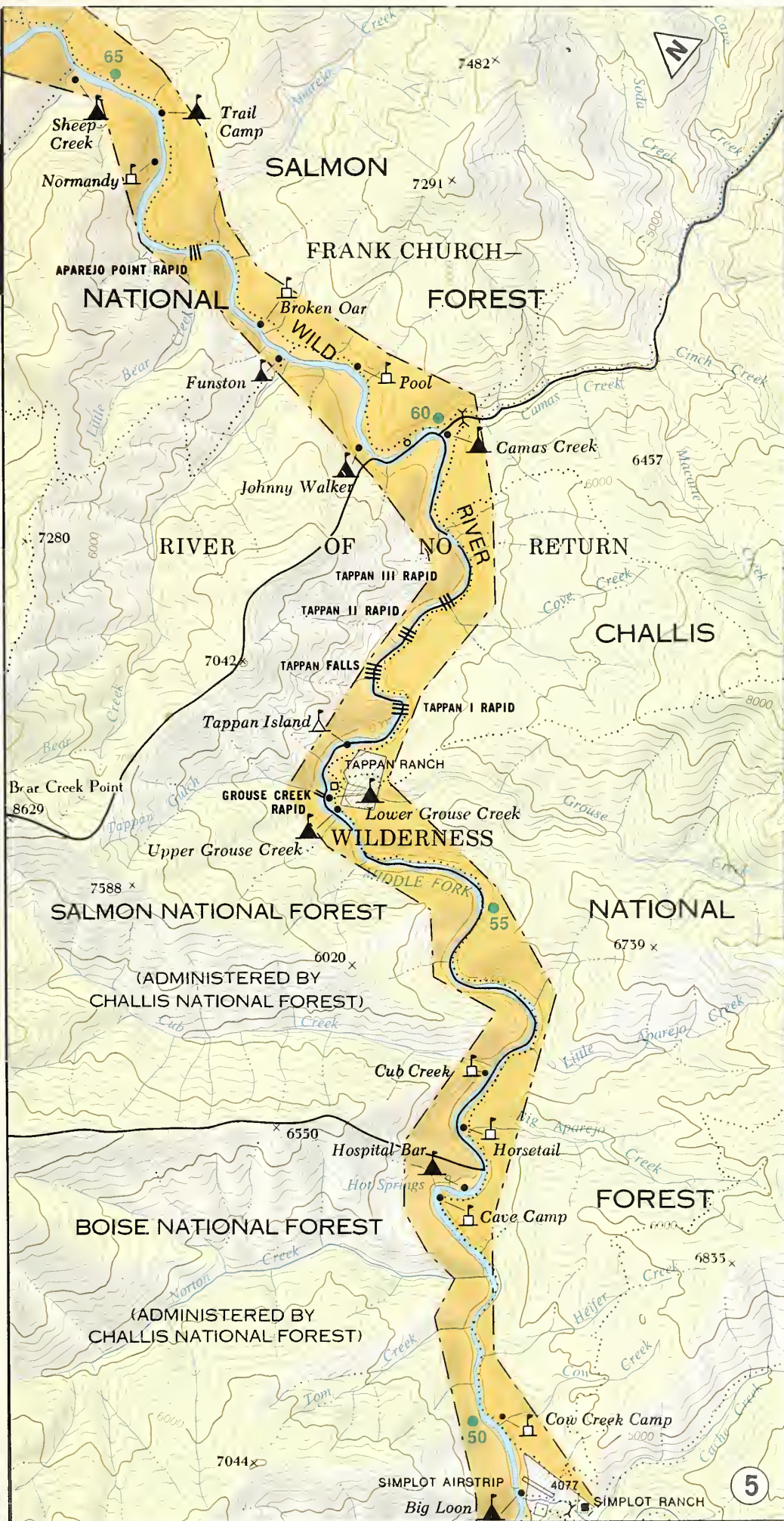
- MILE 39.2 CAMERON CREEK CAMP** (left bank) - The camp is on a large sagebrush flat across from the mouth of Little Loon Creek and just below Cameron Creek.
- MILE 40.4 COUGAR CREEK RANCH** (right bank - private) - This is an outfitter camp near the mouth of Cougar Creek.
- MILE 40.8 MAHONEY CREEK LANDING FIELD** (left bank) - The airfield is on a very high sagebrush bench.
- MILE 41.6 MAHONEY CAMP** (right bank) - This is a small beach camp, adjacent to a large pool, across from the mouth of Mahoney Creek.
- MILE 43.2 PINE CREEK FLAT CAMP** (right bank) - The flat is a large, sage-covered bench with some timber, at the end of a large deep pool where the channel narrows between rock outcroppings.
- MILE 44.5 RED BLUFF CREEK** (right bank - landmark).
- MILE 45.6 CULVER CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - This small camp is just downstream from Foundation Creek (on the left bank) and just above Culver Creek. The rocky outcrop upstream on the left signals the location.
- MILE 46.2 WHITEY COX CAMP** (right bank) - Upstream of the camp you can spot a hot springs on the left, then the river bends sharply to the right and is fairly calm. The camp is located just around this bend where the sand and gravel bar is dominated by a single large ponderosa pine. The springs are located on the second bench above the camp, and above the bench that holds the tadpole-laden pond and the grave of Whitey Cox. Cox was a miner who perished in a rockfall while prospecting in the vicinity in 1954.
- MILE 46.3 ISLAND AND RIFFLE** (Class II) - Immediately below Whitey Cox the river bends to the left. Take the center or right channel, and if headed for Rock Island Camp, start pulling to the left to land.
- MILE 46.3+ ROCK ISLAND CAMP** (left bank) - There is a large campsite on a low bench, with both timber and clear, flat ground. The landing is just below a large rock, so you must anticipate and move quickly.
- MILE 46.6 PEBBLE BEACH CAMP** (left bank) - This is another low bench, with timber cover and room for a large party.
- MILE 47.3 WHITE CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - The Camp is located just below White Creek (which enters on the left bank), just as the White Creek pack bridge comes into view downstream.
- MILE 47.7 WHITE CREEK PACK BRIDGE.**
- MILE 48.1 SHELF CAMP** (right bank) - Access is easy to this site, located at the beginning of the right hand bend below the pack bridge.
- MILE 49.3 BIG LOON CAMP** (right bank) - The camp occupies a large, practically shadeless bar at the mouth of Loon Creek. Toilet. There is an excellent hot springs one mile up Loon Creek. The killing of some miners further upstream precipitated the Sheepeater Indian War of 1878. PLEASE RESPECT THE PRIVATE LAND BEYOND THE FENCE.





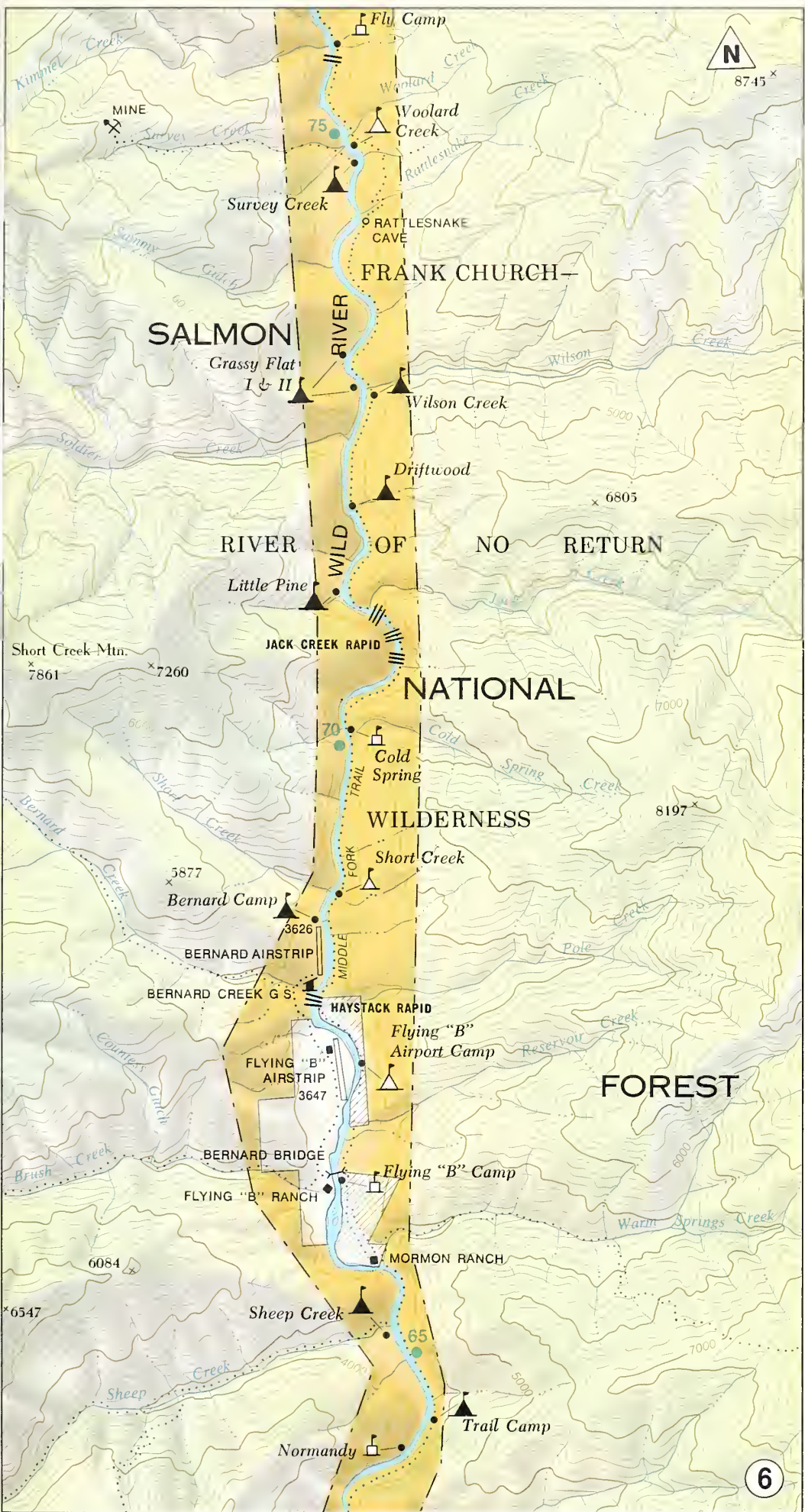
- MILE 49.9 COW CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - This small camp is on a small tree and brush covered bar with a rocky shore.
- MILE 51.8 CAVE CAMP** (right bank) - The camp is on the sharp right hand bend above Hospital Bar; it is on the right just as a cove on the left bank comes into view.
- MILE 52.1 HOSPITAL BAR** (left bank) - The camp occupies a large low bench with plenty of flat ground. Tall ponderosas cover the bench near the river. This is the last hot springs camp on the Middle Fork.
- MILE 52.7 HORSETAIL CAMP** (right bank) - This small camp, located on a high timbered bench with limited clearings, is easily accessible.
- MILE 53.5 CUB CREEK CAMP** (left bank) - The campsite is located above the mouth of Cub Creek.
- MILE 56.4 UPPER GROUSE CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - A popular camp on the upstream end of a large bench formerly a pasture. The camp is sandy, on a large pool with easy landing.
- MILE 56.5 LOWER GROUSE CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - The landing is in the middle of Grouse Creek Rapid. Head for the large beach on the right, after the river makes the right hand bend, and before it swings left.
- MILE 56.6 TAPPAN RANCH CABIN** (right bank) - Landmark on the bench, easily seen from the river.
- MILE 57.0 TAPPAN ISLAND CAMP** (center) - No missing the low, open island, as the river swings right. The current is swift, and landing is difficult; take the right channel.
- MILE 57.5 TAPPAN I** (Class II+ to III-) - This is the first of the Tappan Rapids. It is a quick drop, with a large hole forming below the submerged portion of a rock outcrop on the right bank. Stay in the center.
- MILE 57.9 TAPPAN FALLS** (Class III+ to IV-) - These falls should be scouted. The river swings sharply right, then enters a long calm pool, with the location of the falls at the downstream end of the pool easily recognized. You can land to scout from either bank. In a raft, you will probably want to stay right; far right at high flows, about 10 feet from the right bank at moderate flows. At low water, move further from the bank to avoid a sharp exposed rock in the right channel. There are rocks to be avoided below the falls at lower flows.
- MILE 58.2 TAPPAN II** (Class III) - This drop is marked by a large boulder in center stream. After passing the boulder, move right to avoid rocks and a shelf, exposed at low flows and forming a hole at higher flows.
- MILE 58.4 TAPPAN III** (Class III-) - Stay to the left, particularly at low water levels.
- MILE 59.9 CAMAS CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - The campsite is on the upstream side of Camas Creek, a large stream entering from an immense side canyon. There is additional camping space on the sagebrush flat above the main camp.
- MILE 60.1 OUTFITTER BASE CAMP** (right bank - landmark only)
- MILE 60.6 JOHNNIE WALKER CAMP** (left bank) - This large camp is located on a low, well-timbered bench, backed by a steep rock wall.
- MILE 61.1 POOL CAMP** (right bank) - This small camp is on a bench of sagebrush and scattered trees next to a large, quiet pool.
- MILE 61.6 FUNSTON CAMP** (left bank) - Located just downstream from Big Bear Creek, this small site is a sandy beach on the river. The adjacent sagebrush and timber bench offers more space.
- MILE 61.9 BROKEN OAR CAMP** (right bank) - A small camp on a sandy, sagebrush flat, with some ponderosas. Landing is easy.
- MILE 62.8 APAREJO POINT RAPIDS** (Class II+ to III-) - This is a fairly easy run, just after the river makes a bend to the left. Enter in the center and work left, avoiding rocks on the right at the bottom. Aparejo is Spanish for packsaddle, or harness, or fishing tackle, any of which would fit.
- MILE 64.3 NORMANDY BEACH CAMP** (left bank) - This small camp is on a sagebrush and scattered pine beach, backed by a steep, rocky slope.
- MILE 64.5 TRAIL CAMP** (right bank) - This large, popular camp is located on a low, timbered bench.
- MILE 65.3 SHEEP CREEK CAMP** (left bank) - This is a large camp on the upstream side of the mouth of Sheep Creek. There are large, open spaces with tree cover near the creek bank.





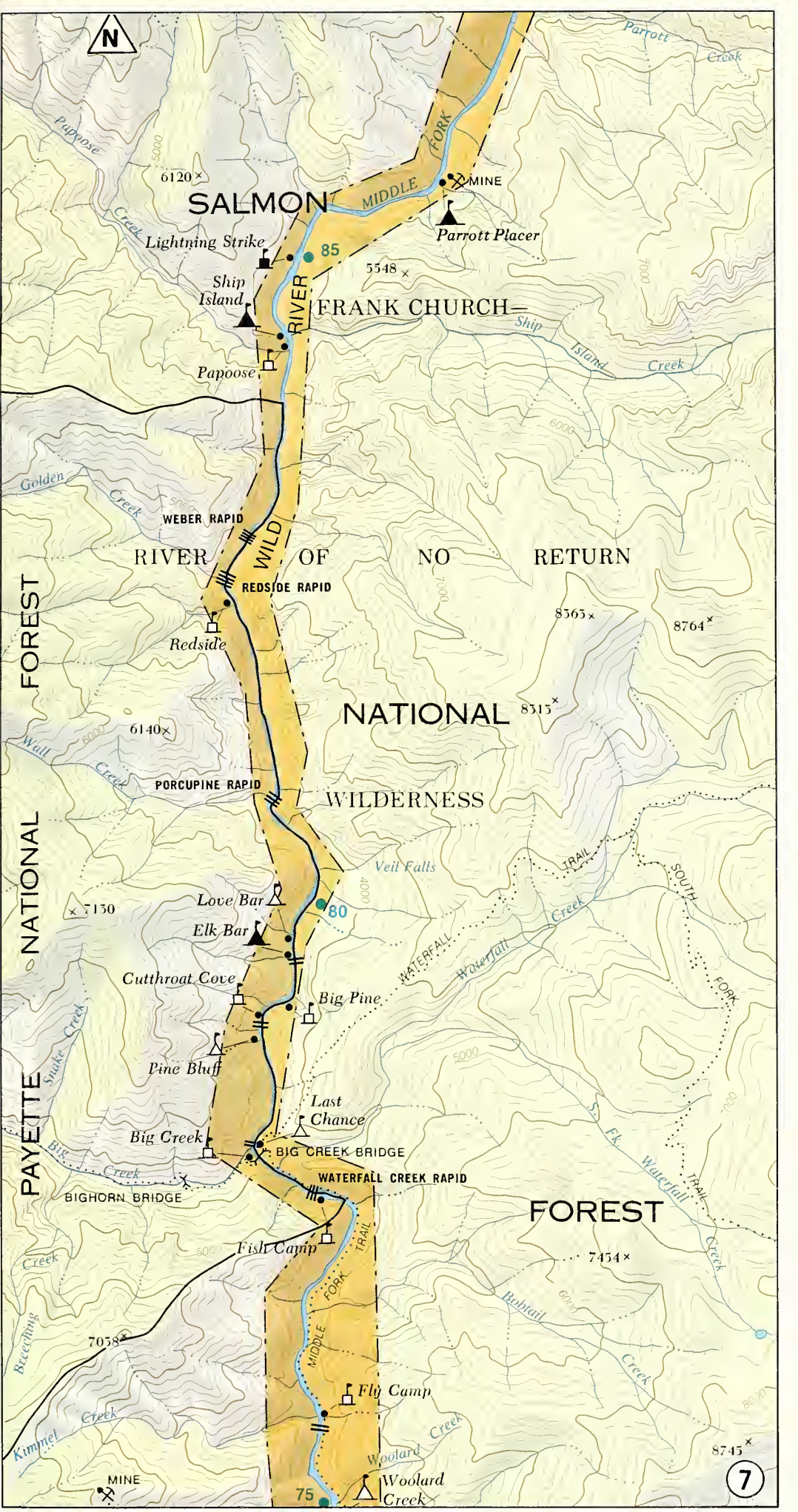
- MILE 65.9**     **MORMON RANCH** (right bank - landmark)
- MILE 66.8**     **FLYING B CAMP** (right bank) - This small camp is at the water's edge just upstream from the Bernard Bridge.
- MILE 66.8**     **BERNARD BRIDGE** (landmark)
- MILE 67.7**     **FLYING B AIRPORT CAMP** (right bank) - Camp on stretch of bank across from the airstrip.
- MILE 68.1**     **HAYSTACK RAPIDS** (Class III) - This is a long rock garden, requiring a fair amount of maneuvering. At the end of the Flying B Airstrip, the river bends left, picks up speed and then swings right. Haystack Rapids immediately follow the right bend. The left is the better route at higher flows, but at lower water becomes very rocky, and the right presents a better approach. Work toward the center of the rapid and select a path between the large boulders at the bottom. A submerged rock near the large boulder on the right forms a big hole at some flows. Keep left of center between the house-sized rocks. Below these is a Class II continuation; the entire rapid is about 150 to 200 yards long.
- MILE 68.2**     **BERNARD GUARD STATION** (left bank) - The building can be seen on the bench above the river. The Bernard Creek Landing Field extends downstream. (Bernard was the army commander during the Sheepeater Indian War of 1878).
- MILE 68.7**     **BERNARD CAMP** (left bank) - This site is located at lower end of Bernard Creek airstrip.
- MILE 68.9**     **SHORT CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - Just below Bernard Camp on the opposite side of the river. This is a sage flat bordered by a rocky shore. Access is easy.
- MILE 70.2**     **COLD SPRING CAMP** (right bank) - Located just below the mouth of Cold Spring Creek. This camp is on a bench about 20 feet above the river and back in the trees. The shore is rocky.
- MILE 70.7**     **JACK CREEK RAPIDS** (Class II+ to III-) - The rapids begin approximately ¼ mile above the mouth of Jack Creek. There is an earthquake rock in the runout of the first rapid. Run either to the far right or left of the rock. The rest of this is not a difficult white water stretch, but at high water can be as much as a half mile long with big waves. At low water, stay right of center.
- MILE 71.4**     **LITTLE PINE CAMP** (left bank) - This is a medium-sized camp below the right hand bend after Jack Creek Rapids. The site is on a grassy bench with scattered trees and brush.
- MILE 72.1**     **DRIFTWOOD FLAT CAMP** (right bank) - This camp has tree cover at the back of the beach, some large rocks, and a good view of the cliff on the opposite bank. The site is littered with large logs.
- MILE 72.9**     **WILSON CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - The camp is above the mouth of Wilson Creek and is easily seen and accessible. The site is sandy with scattered brush and one large ponderosa pine tree.
- MILE 73.0**     **GRASSY FLAT CAMP I AND II** (left bank) - Both camps are located on the large open bench downstream from Wilson Creek. Landing is easy.
- MILE 74.0**     **SAMMY GULCH** (left bank - landmark)
- MILE 74.4**     **RATTLESNAKE CREEK AND CAVE** (right bank) - This was once a popular campsite, but camping and fires are now prohibited because of past abuse. The shallow cave contains Indian pictographs.
- MILE 74.8**     **SURVEY CREEK CAMP** (left bank) - A low bench with a cobble beach upstream and small sand beach downstream, located just above the riffle where the river bends slightly left. There is good timber cover.
- MILE 74.9**     **WOLLARD CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - This popular camp is on a large grassy bench just slightly downstream and across from Survey Creek Camp. Landing is at the sandy bank at the upstream end of the site.
- MILE 75.7**     **FLY CAMP** (right bank) - Located just below a small rapid, this small sandy beach has some large rocks and short trees for cover. Kimmel Creek waterfall on the opposite bank identifies the location.





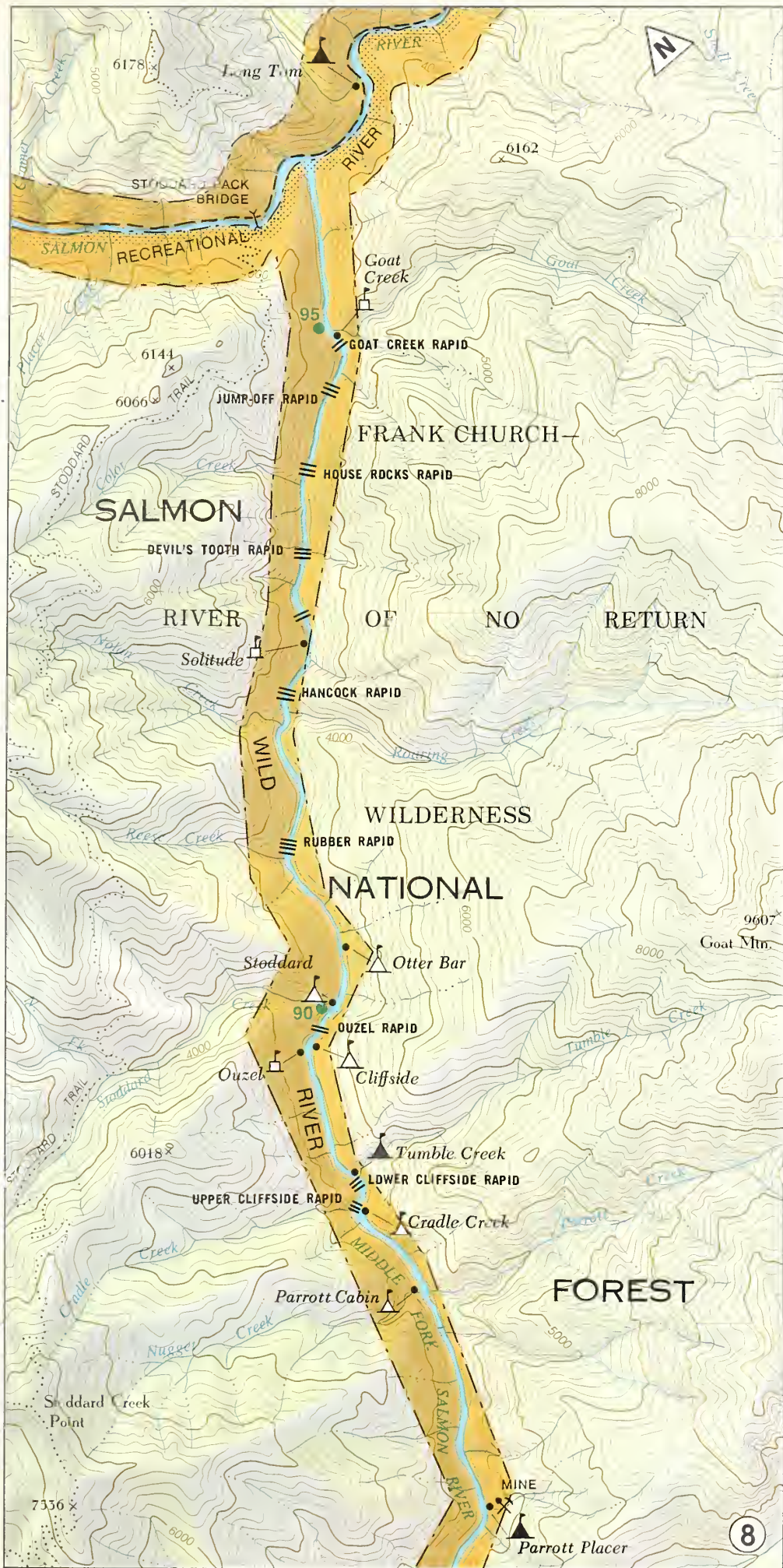
- MILE 76.4 BOBTAIL CREEK** (right bank - landmark)
- MILE 77.4 FISH CAMP** (left bank) - This very small and rocky camp is at the upstream end of a rock bar, bordered by thick brush and timber.
- MILE 77.6 WATERFALL CREEK RAPIDS** (Class III-) - At high water this is a straightforward ride with no obstacles. At lower flows, it should be run to the right or the left, avoiding the widow-maker in the center.
- MILE 77.8 WATERFALL CREEK AND FALLS** (right bank) - The Big Creek Bridge is visible just downstream as you pass this cascade which tumbles several hundred feet to the river.
- MILE 77.9 BIG CREEK PACK BRIDGE AND BIG CREEK CAMP** (left bank) - This small, brushy camp is located just upstream from the mouth of Big Creek and below the bridge.
- MILE 77.9 BIG CREEK RAPID** (Class II+) - The rapid begins immediately below the mouth of Big Creek. Enter right of center and work left to avoid the large rock at the bottom.
- MILE 78.0 LAST CHANCE CAMP** (right bank) - Land at the downstream end of the bench, just past the large ponderosa pine which dominates it. The campsite is on a high, narrow bench with sand, grass and boulders. (This is sometimes called Big Creek Camp; make sure which of these you have been assigned.)
- MILE 78.7 PINE BLUFF CAMP** (left bank) - This small sandy camp, on a timbered site, is located just above a small rapid.
- MILE 78.9 CUTTHROAT COVE CAMP** (left bank) - Below the small rapids and next to a quiet pool; this is a small sandbar backed by rock and brush.
- MILE 79.2 BIG PINE CAMP** (right bank) - The river bends sharply left just below a large pool where the camp is located. A rock wall faces the camp from the opposite bank. The site is a sandbar, grading into timber.
- MILE 79.6 ELK BAR CAMP** (left bank) - This is a large sandbar on a pool just below a small rapid. A sheer cliff is immediately behind the bar. The upstream end of the site is rocky, grading into a high bench.
- MILE 79.7 LOVE BAR CAMP** (left bank) - This is a small downstream site from Elk Bar Camp and separated by rocks. A cliff comes down to the river at the downstream end.
- MILE 80.7 VEIL FALLS** (right bank - a landmark) - Falls on a high cliff above the river. It is spectacular in spring, diminishing in size later in the season.
- MILE 81.0 PORCUPINE RAPIDS** (Class III-) - A short and straightforward rapid on the sharp right bend below Veil Falls. A hole forms below the rock ledge which comes in from the left, opposite the sheer rock wall on the right bank. Enter center right to avoid the hole, then work left to stay off the wall as the river swings slightly left. The position of the hole shifts with the water level, moving at lower flows.
- MILE 82.5 REDSIDE CAMP** (left bank) - This small camp is upstream from Redside Rapids, at the mouth of a small stream. The site is on a high bench with scattered timber.
- MILE 82.7 REDSIDE RAPIDS** (Class II- to IV-) - Like Weber Rapids just downstream, this is a difficult run which should not be taken lightly. The rapids are a short, steep drop among huge boulders. It can be scouted by landing above it on the left, and is signaled by the river bending to the right. If you haven't run this one before, it's worth taking a look at first. The top of the drop is marked by a massive boulder on the right and another in the center. At high water there is a sneak on the extreme left or right banks. At lower flows, go right of center boulder. It is best to approach this drop from left of center in the stretch above. Watch for and avoid the large boulders below the main drop.
- MILE 83.0 WEBER RAPIDS** (Class III+ to IV-) - Can't relax after running Redside Rapids successfully. Weber is as mean or worse. At high water stay in the center. At moderate flows run left of center. At low flow enter left of center and work to the center. This rapid is risky at low flow.
- MILE 83.2 MIST FALLS** (right bank - landmark)
- MILE 84.4 PAPOOSE CAMP** (left bank) - Situated at the mouth of Papoose Creek, this is a very small camp, with room for no more than 6 comfortably.
- MILE 84.5 SHIP ISLAND CAMP** (left bank) - A large camp, situated on the bench across from Ship Island Creek, which enters the river on the right bank. The shore is rocky through here and tree-lined. The bench is long, narrow, and flat. Fast landing.
- MILE 85.0 LIGHTNING STRIKE CAMP** (left bank) - This small beach camp is about half way down the long straight stretch following Ship Island Camp. It takes its name from a lightning burned stump.
- MILE 86.2 PARROT PLACER CAMP** (right bank) - Landing is easy at this large sandy beach surrounded by brush and trees. The beach is just after the river bends left with a riffle. Earl Parrott worked this stretch of river, looking for gold during the early part of the century.



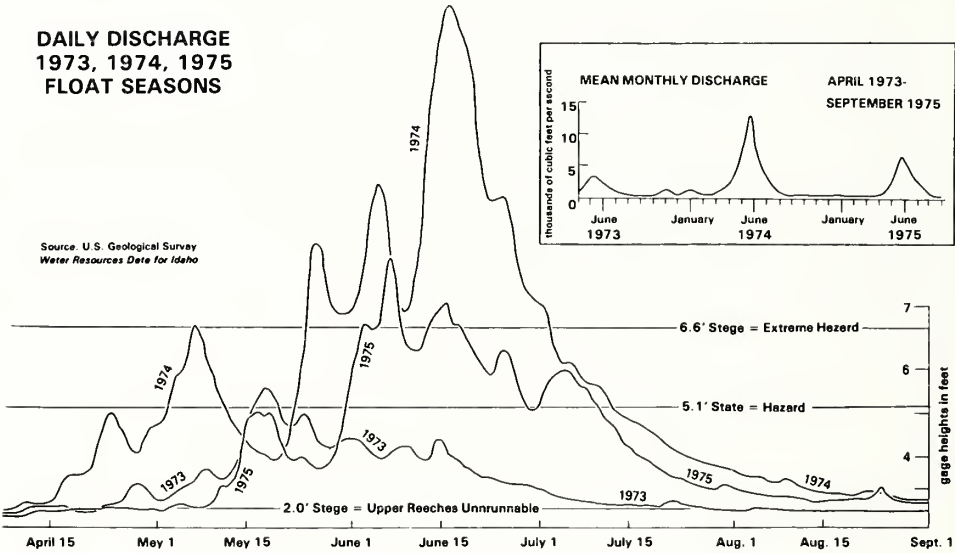


- MILE 87.9**    **PARROT CABIN CAMP** (left bank) - The cabin is just below the mouth of Nugget Creek, at the end of a long, straight stretch. There is a beautiful veil falls in the grotto above camp. The camp area is small.
- MILE 88.6**    **UPPER CLIFFSIDE RAPIDS** (Class III) - The river swings right and swings along a sheer cliff. You can sneak this rapid to the right, close to the gravel bar. Center left is more fun, if you keep away from the cliff; the runout is a series of standing waves.
- MILE 88.6**    **CRADLE CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - After running the rapids, pull out of the main current into an eddy on the inside of the bend, and land on the beach. The camp is on the bench by the large boulder, with some tree cover and room for about 15 people.
- MILE 88.7**    **LOWER CLIFFSIDE RAPIDS** (Class III) - This is a continuation of Upper Cliffsides, around the bend from the big eddy noted above. A rock garden, it develops fearsome holes on the right at high flows. Stay left, next to the cliff, which is the clearest and most straightforward.
- MILE 88.8**    **TUMBLE CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - Just past the second part of Cliffsides Rapids, this campsite is on a high grassy bench at the mouth of Tumble Creek.
- MILE 89.6**    **OUZEL CAMP** (left bank) - Small sandy beach, but with rocks, the site will accommodate only about 10 people. Landing is easy.
- MILE 89.7**    **CLIFFSIDE CAMP** (right bank) - The river swings right and against a cliff, with a small riffle. The camp, dominated by a large pine, is on the sand and gravel bar on the inside of the bend. Easy landing.
- MILE 89.8**    **OUZEL RAPIDS** (Class II+) - This is an easy rock garden, but a fairly long one. It begins at Cliffsides Camp, where some care should be taken to avoid the cliff on the left, and continues past Stoddard Creek almost as far as Otter Bar.
- MILE 90.0**    **STODDARD CAMP** (left bank) - Located just below the mouth of Stoddard Creek, this is a large high sagebrush bench with small trees and shrubs. The camp will accommodate a large party, but landing is difficult.
- MILE 90.4**    **OTTER BAR CAMP** (right bank) - This long beach and sandbar is the last large camp on the river.
- MILE 91.1**    **RUBBER RAPIDS** (Class IV-) - This is the heaviest whitewater on the river, without much room for maneuvering. At high water the drop forms a huge wave, which is still big at lower flows. As you approach the rapids, the river bends slightly to the right, and the pool starts to pick up speed. Stay in the center and follow the tongue. This leads to the main drop where the river cascades over large submerged boulders. Large waves of decreasing magnitude follow. The runout is good, though turbulent. You may have to work a bit to stay off the rocks along the right bank. The rapid becomes progressively easier as the water level drops.
- MILE 92.2**    **HANCOCK RAPIDS** (Class IV-) - This is longer than Rubber Rapids; it begins at the mouth of Roaring Creek as a Class II+ rock garden leading to the main drop at the bottom. The upper section can best be run to the right of center. Stay center as you round the bend to the right, and take the main drop about 10-15 feet from the right bank. The river continues against a rock wall on the right in a series of stand-ding waves.
- MILE 92.7**    **SOLITUDE CAMP** (left bank) - A small camp on a low sandbar. Capacity varies from year to year, depending on how much sand has been deposited, and on how much of that is exposed by changing water levels.
- MILE 93.4**    **DEVIL'S TOOTH RAPID** (Class III-) - Large boulders punctuate this drop. The first in a series extending over the next mile. Run this one to the right of center.
- MILE 94.0**    **HOUSE ROCKS RAPIDS** (Class IV to III-) - Another drop with huge boulders, requiring some maneuvering. At lower flows, there is an easy center route through the boulders at the top. The rapids are more difficult at higher water, when a hard left is required.
- MILE 94.5**    **JUMP-OFF RAPIDS** (Class III-) - A submerged rock on the left at the bottom forms a fair hole. Enter right of center and work right against the current which tends to carry you into the hole, particularly at high flows. This is the last rapid of any real consequence.
- MILE 94.9**    **GOAT CREEK RAPID** (Class II+) - A rock garden with many small choppy waves, these rapids are on the last major bend as the river enters the fairly straight reach leading to the confluence with the main stem. Stay slightly left of center.
- MILE 94.9**    **GOAT CREEK CAMP** (right bank) - A very small camp among the rocks just below the Goat Creek Rapids; it is used primarily as a last day lunch stop.
- MILE 96.3**    **CONFLUENCE OF THE MIDDLE FORK AND MAIN STEM OF THE SALMON** - The river flows west from here to Riggins as the "River of No Return". There has been a launch and pull-out spot on the right bank for years, but the new take out is at Cache Bar, downstream. If you have a through trip, stop at Corn Creek for trip permit on down Main Salmon.





- MILE 96.9**     **STODDARD PACK BRIDGE** - Access to the Wilderness is via the Stoddard Trail which crosses the river at this point, and then climbs to the top of the ridge.
- MILE 97.9**     **PLACER CREEK** (left bank) - Placer enters the river from the left.
- MILE 99.0**     **UNNAMED RAPIDS** (Class II+) - This is a relatively straight forward drop.
- MILE 99.7**     **CACHE BAR** - This is the take-out point for Middle Fork trips. Please be patient, as the boat ramp is often very congested.



**EUROPEAN RAPID RATING SYSTEM**

Each rapid shown on the map is rated one through six. The ratings indicate the difficulty of each rapid at a medium water level.

- I**     **CLASS I**     **VERY EASY**—small regular waves and riffles; few or no obstacles; little maneuvering required.
- II**     **CLASS II**     **EASY**—small waves with some eddies, low ledges, and slow rock gardens; some maneuvering required.
- III**     **CLASS III**     **MEDIUM**—numerous waves that are high and irregular; strong eddies; narrow, but clear passages that require expertise in maneuvering; scouting from the shore necessary.
- IV**     **CLASS IV**     **DIFFICULT**—long rapids with powerful, irregular waves, dangerous rocks, and boiling eddies; precise maneuvering and scouting from the shore imperative; take all possible safety precautions.
- V**     **CLASS V**     **VERY DIFFICULT**—long rapids with wild turbulence and extremely congested routes that require complex maneuvering; a danger to your life and boat and near the limits of navigation.
- VI**     **CLASS VI**     **THE LIMITS OF NAVIGATION**—rarely run; a definite hazard to your life.







## HISTORY

In the early 1800's, explorers and trappers found Shoshone Indians living in the Salmon River Mountains. Bone chips, tools and mussel shells found in rock shelters along the rugged canyon walls confirm that primitive man once lived here over 8,000 years ago.

Rich historically and of interest geographically, the Middle Fork of the Salmon River was the setting for one of Idaho's past sagas—the Sheepeater Campaign of 1879.

Sheepeater Indians—a sub-group of the Northern Shoshone—depended upon mountain sheep for food. The Sheepeaters were accused of ambushing four men in Long Valley and massacring five Chinese at Oro Grande.

In the spring of 1879, troops at Fort Boise, commanded by Captain Reuben F. Bernard, set out to subdue the Indians. Bernard and his men ventured out into this vast domain marked on maps as “unexplored”. Crossing the mountains, they descended into the Middle Fork via Loon Creek. Bernard commented in his diary that “...within a distance of 10 miles, we have come from 10 feet of snow to roses and rattlesnakes”.

Bernard's forces had their first battle with the “Sheepeaters” at Vinegar Hill, west of the Middle Fork near Big Creek. Surrounded by Indians, his soldiers ran out of water and were compelled to drink vinegar.

Some weeks later, two of Bernard's lieutenants with 23 men, negotiated the surrender of the Sheepeaters—51 in all. The Indians had been worn out physically and psychologically by their pursuers.

## WILDLIFE

The river provides outstanding fishing. Salmon, steelhead, cutthroat, rainbow, whitefish, and Dolly Varden are found here. Nearly one-third of the Chinook Salmon spawning nests (called “redds”) in the Salmon River drainage occur in the Middle Fork and its tributaries. The Chinook migrate from the Pacific Ocean up the Columbia River from March through July, spawning in the Middle Fork during August and September. After the young spend one to two years in fresh water, they descend to the ocean where they mature before returning to their ancestral waters to spawn and die. Steelhead, an ocean-going rainbow trout, migrate up the Salmon River during the fall and spring, and spawn in the Middle Fork and tributaries each spring.

The Middle Fork country abounds in game such as deer, elk, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, and bear. Because much of the rugged canyon is virtually impassable on foot or horseback, some hunters boat down the river. Other wildlife includes cougar, lynx, bobcat, coyote, fox, porcupine, badger, beaver, marten, mink, otter, muskrat, and skunk. Chukar partridge and Franklin, blue and ruffed grouse are also found here.

The Forest Service manages wildlife habitat on the National Forests. Bag limits and seasons are established by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

## POINTS OF INTEREST

Among the river's points of interest are the fish ladder at Dagger Falls, built to assist salmon in their migration; Sheepeater Hot Springs, named for Sheepeater Indians (mile 12.9); Whitey Cox's Camp and Grave—burial site of a prospector who was killed in 1954 by a rock falling while placer mining (mile 46.2); Hospital Bar, with its hot springs at the upper end of the campsite, was supposedly the spot where the wounded soldiers recovered (mile 52.1); Soldier's Monument at Soldier Bar Landing Field about 4 miles up Big Creek, marking the grave of Private Harry Eagan, the only soldier killed during the Sheepeater Campaign (mile 77.9); Veil Cave is a huge open-faced cavern carved from water and glaciers that hued out the canyon. Indian pictographs can be seen on the upper walls. Mountain sheep frequent this site. The view in and around the cave is worth the steep climb (mile 80.7); Parrott Diggings, left by Earl Parrott, a hermit prospector who gave up city life to seek his fortune along the Middle Fork (mile 86.2). Earl Parrott has two cabins, one located at the mouth of Nuggett Creek, and one placed about 1,000 vertical feet above the river cabin. He reached his cliff-side cabin by using a series of ladders.

## GEOLOGY

The Frank Church—River of No Return Wilderness occupies part of an extensive geological formation known as the Idaho Batholith. This formation, which is mainly granite, has been severely eroded, exposing underlying rock formations layed down during the Precambrian, Permian, Triassic, and Cretaceous geological periods.

Most recent volcanic activity (25 to 30 million years ago) resulted in the Casto formations along the Middle Fork of the Salmon River drainage.

## SAFE FLOATBOATING

Floatboating down the Middle Fork is an experience full of adventure and thrills. Placid emerald-hued pools alternate with swift currents and boiling waters of dazzling white rapids.

The Middle Fork is not a place for the novice boater. Those unfamiliar with the river can get into dangerous water without warning. Persons lacking experience, equipment, and knowledge of the river should obtain the services of a licensed outfitter or guide.

Floatboating is especially hazardous during the spring highwater period, which is May through June. The road to Boundary Creek is not normally open until June 15 because of snow. Many early floaters fly into Indian Creek. The popular boating period is from July to September. Many start their trip at the road end at Boundary Creek. Later in the summer when the water is low, it is best to start float trips at one of the downstream landing fields. Current water conditions and forecasts may be obtained from the Middle Fork District Office located in Challis, Idaho, and referenced on the second page of this guide.

Most floating is done in large rubber rafts. More skilled boaters may use kayaks, McKenzies, dories, or drift boats. Other types of water craft are not recommended. U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets designed for river running are required for each person and should be worn at all times while on the river. Bedding and other equipment should be packed in water-resistant containers and tied securely to the boat. For safety reasons, two or more rafts are recommended.

First-aid equipment and knowledge is essential for each party. The Middle Fork canyon is rattlesnake habitat; therefore, knowledge of proper snakebite treatment is suggested. Patches of poison ivy can be found along the river bank.

A Forest Service patrol boat and kayak team are on the river intermittently throughout the season. The patrolmen carry radios for emergency purposes. In the event of an emergency on the river, communications or help can usually be obtained at the following locations:

- Boundary Creek Campground (mile 0)
- Pistol Creek Ranch (private) (mile 23.9)
- Indian Creek Guard Station F.S. (mile 24.7)
- Middle Fork Lodge (private) (mile 33.3)
- Little Creek Guard Station F.S. (mile 35.8)
- Simplot Ranch (private) (mile 49.3)
- Flying B Ranch (private) (mile 67.7)
- Cache Bar Launch and Take-Out (99.7)
- Corn Creek Campground (mile 105)

## AIR TRAVEL

Landing fields along the Middle Fork are minimally developed airstrips. Those planning to fly into the area should check with the Idaho Department of Aeronautics at Boise. Information on facilities is available in the "Idaho Airport Facilities Directory" and the "Idaho Aeronautical Chart". During the summer, flying should be confined to early morning or late evening. Flights into the area are recommended only for qualified pilots familiar with mountain flying. Flying accidents are not uncommon and usually occur as a result of inexperience and poor judgment.

Commercial flight services are available in Challis, Salmon, McCall, Boise, Cascade, and other Idaho towns. Information can be obtained by calling the District Ranger's office in Challis, Salmon, McCall, Boise, and Cascade. These offices are noted on the second page of this guide.

## MINIMUM IMPACT CAMPING

Help us protect the beauty and naturalness of this unique wild environment. A few simple rules of self-conduct will ensure perpetuation of special wilderness features. The following are guidelines:

### SANITATION

Toilets are provided in some camps. If you are assigned to a camp without a toilet, you must be prepared to carry out all human wastes to the provided dump site.

Pack out all nonburnable refuse such as cans, can tabs, bottles, and aluminum foil. Burying is not satisfactory. Try to leave the site cleaner than when you arrived. Cigarette butts thrown on the ground seem insignificant, but accumulate quickly and detract from the beauty of a campsite.

### WILDFIRES

Even though the Middle Fork canyon is rocky, there is enough vegetation on the hillsides to carry disastrous fires. Trees, grasses, and brush become extremely dry during the summer. A fire, once started, can flash quickly up steep slopes. Fire control is extremely difficult because of the rough terrain and the remoteness of this back country. Tremendous expense is required to suppress wildfires. We must also consider the disastrous effect on vegetation, soil, and scenery. Please, put your campfires completely out.

All boating parties on the Middle Fork of the Salmon Wild River are required to use fire pans, or liquid fuel stoves. All open fires must be contained in a metal fire pan to eliminate fire rings and prevent the spread of ash or charcoal on the beaches and camps.

## FIRE PAN USE

- (1) Before the fire is built, place an inch layer of sand on the bottom of your fire pan. Elevate it on rocks if possible, to protect the soil and surrounding vegetation.
- (2) During the use of the fire, be very careful not to throw in any material that will not completely burn—aluminum foil, melon rinds, etc.
- (3) As you break camp, let the fire burn out as completely as possible.
- (4) Thoroughly dampen and cool the ashes in the fire pan. Use a minimum amount of water, but mix and stir the ashes and water completely.
- (5) The material is then emptied into a can, ammo box, or other metal container. The ashes are carried with you and placed in the fire pan at the next camp, eliminating the need for additional sand.

Using this method, campfire ashes and debris can be carried out of the Wild River area along with the rest of your garbage and trash. Do not dump ashes in the river, since they may be deposited back on the beaches.

## OTHER FIRE RULES

- (1) Never cut and burn live material.
- (2) Keep your fire small.
- (3) Do not build a fire during windy conditions.
- (4) Never leave a fire unattended.
- (5) Drown your fire with water or mix with mineral soil. Stir it with a stick or shovel. A fire is never out until it feels cold.
- (6) Do not smoke while hiking or riding. Smoke only in a clear area. Extinguish smoking material completely.
- (7) Carry a shovel, bucket, and an ax. They may be required during fire season.



Because of the growing scarcity of firewood, we encourage the use of charcoal briquettes. They are effective for cooking and produce very little ash.

## SOAP

Use no soap or shampoo in any stream, lake or hot spring. If you wash or shampoo, locate yourself above the high water mark and make sure the water and soap will not drain back into the stream. Strain your dishwater over a large area well above the high water mark. Please help maintain the high water quality characteristic of the Middle Fork.



## VEGETATION

Please do not cut or destroy any live vegetation. During the summer season, firewood becomes scarce at the campsites and you should plan on gathering firewood before you get to camp.

## INDIAN ARTIFACTS AND HISTORIC SITES

Indian artifacts and evidence of pioneer settlers are a part of the Middle Fork history and culture. Those who follow will appreciate your protective ethic.

## CAMPSITES

Campsites for boaters on the Middle Fork are assigned at the launch point. You may encounter backpackers or horseback campers who have entered the river corridor and are not aware of float boat assignments. If you should encounter them at your assigned camp, be friendly and courteous. Usually a compromise can be worked out. We have no way of assigning campsites to these people and they, too, have a right to enjoy the National Forest lands. Please be understanding and compatible.





### **GIANT HELLEBORINE—EPIPACTUS GIGANTEA**

This member of the orchid family currently has State Threatened status.

Its flowers are irregular and typically orchid-like, about 3 cm broad with yellow-green sepals and coppery-brown petals.

This species is confined to moist sites bordering hot or cold springs, either in full sun or partial shade, along the Middle Fork Salmon River and several tributaries.

Because of its apparent restriction to primarily thermal springs, and overall rarity in the State, trampling and collecting by bathers has become a concern.

Please help preserve this beautiful plant for those who follow.





R0001 125887



# LOCATION MAP



R0001 125887



U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
Intermountain Region

